

## New Year, New Habits: Tips for Success

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It's that time again when many of us are thinking about the things we want to accomplish over the next year. The new year is a great opportunity to think about our wellness goals and commit to building new, healthy habits. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done! Building a new habit is not always easy, but it's worth it. If healthy habits are part of your New Year's resolution, here are a few tips for success:

- ✓ **Be specific**

You will be more likely to stick to your goal if you know exactly what you're supposed to do. "Eat healthy" can be an overwhelming task, but "eat one vegetable a day" is more manageable. Other specific goals might include going to the gym once per week or walking around your neighborhood every other day.

- ✓ **Create reminders**

New habits can be easy to forget. Create reminders for yourself to keep it fresh in your mind. Set an alarm on your phone, put a note on your mirror or set your running shoes by the front door. Small cues like this can make you more likely to follow through.

- ✓ **Stay flexible**

Building habits is easier when you add some variety to your routine. Start with your main plan, such as going for a walk at 8 a.m., but try out other times too, like over lunch or after work. Being flexible with your habits help you stick to them, especially when unexpected things happen. This way, you can have backup plans for the days when you can't follow your usual routine.

- ✓ **Find support**

Building good habits is easier with support from friends and family. Tell them about your goals so they can help you stay motivated. Joining a group with established habits can help too. Maybe your town has a running club or a local business with salsa nights. Finding people to be social with while you work toward your goals can make a big difference.

- ✓ **Make it fun**

Create habits that you actually *want* to do. If you are trying to get more exercise but hate the gym, there are so many other ways to get active. Sign up for a dance class, go for a bike ride or even do some gardening in your backyard. Don't be afraid to get creative.

If you don't know where to start, Community Health Workers can help you find resources that support your goals. Visit [nwa.uams.edu/chr](http://nwa.uams.edu/chr) to connect with someone in your area.